Thus was opened the way for what was the most profound and influential effect of Austerlitz: the attempted substitution for the effete Holy Roman Empire under a German prince, of another Western empire to be ruled by the Emperor of the French, with territorial subdivisions under Napoleonic princes, all subject to the central power.
The first step taken toward establishing this new conception was a further advance in Italy. At the critical moment of the Austerlitz campaign, Caroline, the Queen of Naples, Napoleon's irreconcilable enemy, had broken her sourly given engagement with him. Her harbors were opened to English ships, and Russian troops occupied her territories. The Czar had prided himself on his guardian relation to the Two Sicilies: his check at Austerlitz and his dismissal from the scene of action were not a sufficient humiliation; the very next day an army order was issued which sent Massena to Naples, and declared that the Bourbon dynasty had ceased to exist. By decree of the French senate, Joseph Bonaparte was on March thirtieth, 1806, made king of Naples and Sicily. It was with reluctance and under the sting of sharp admonitions that he left his elegant, important ease and took the crown upon his uneasy head, "to keep a firm hand" on unwilling subjects, "to be master" where he was at best an unwilling tool The new monarch retained his French dignities, but assumed the role of a dependent ally of France. At the same time and in the same way all Venetia was incorporated with the kingdom of Italy. Elisa's appanage of Lucca was increased by the districts of Massa-e-Car-rara and Garfagnana; the principality of Guastalla was made over to Pauline. Still further, twenty hereditary duchies were organized, either at once or later, bearing the titles of Dalmatia, Istria, Friuli, Cadore, Belluno,